

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00 HA-05 /092 W
-----069860 040957Z /15

R 031448Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9903
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
USMISSION SINAI
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 14217

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT EG
SUBJECT: WAFD DISSOLVES ITSELF

REF: CAIRO 14191 (NOTAL)

1. WAFD PART GENERAL ASSEMBLY, MEETING EVENING
JUNE 2, VOTED DISSOLVE ITSELF AFTER ONLY FOUR
MONTHS EXISTENCE. DECISION TAKEN AS RESULT LAW IMPLEMEN
TING REFERENDUM, WHICH WOULD HAVE REMOVED PARTY'S TOP
LEADERSHIP FROM OFFICE.

2. SPEAKING TO EMBOFF SHORTLY AFTER MEETING, SENIOR WAFD
OFFICIAL SAID DPARTY'S OBJECTIVE FIS TOF ATTEMPT EMBARRASS
SADAT BEFORE WORLD PUBLIC OPINION. PARTY WILL NOT ALLOW
SADAT MAINTAIN FACADE OF DEMOCRACY WITH EMASCULATED POLI-
TICAL PARTIES. OFFICIAL CLAIMED RECENT GOE ACTS HAVE MADE
OPPOSITION POLITICS "IMPOSSIBLE". HE ALLEGED PRIME MINI-
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STER HAD "STOLEN" ALEXANDRIA BY-ELECTION. SAID THIS FEEL-
ING REINFORCED BY NEW PRESS LAW WHICH GIVES ASU 49 PERCENT
OF PARTY PAPERS AND WHICH WILL, HE CLAIMED, DESTROY ORGANS'
INDEPENDENCE. FINALLY, SAID LAW IMPLEMENTING REFERENDUM
WOULD HAVE PERMITTED GOVERNMENT TO DICTATE OPPOSITION
PARTIES' LEADERSHIP.

3. WAFD OFFICIAL CLAIMED DISSOLUTION ENDORSED BY "ALL" DELEGATES ATTENDING ASSEMBLY, INCLUDING PARTY'S PARLIAMENTARY LEADER HILMY MURAD. SAID PARTY MEMBERS WILL CONTINUE CONFRONT GOVERNMENT, BUT AS INDIVIDUALS--LOWERING THEIR LIABILITY UNDER NEW LAW. OFFICIAL SUGGESTED LAW'S CONSTITUTIONALITY WILL BE CHALLENGED BY THOSE DIRECTLY AFFECTED, BUT HE DID NOT THINK THIS WOULD BE EFFECTIVE: COURTS ARE UNLIKELY TO RULE AGAINST GOVERNMENT.

4. WAFDIST SHOWED EMBOFF STATEMENT (IN ENGLISH) PARTY INTENDS ISSUE EXPLAINING DECISION. IT STRONGLY ATTACKS GOE ON HUMAN RIGHTS GROUNDS. STATEMENT CONTAINS MOST OF ALLEGATIONS CITED ABOVE, CONCLUDING THAT MEASURES ADOPTED BY GOVERNMENT HAVE ELIMINATED POLITICAL FREEDOM AND MADE OPPOSITION POLITICS MEANINGLESS.

5. EDITORIAL, ALL PAPERS JUNE 3 CONDEMNED WAFD, COMMENTING THAT DECISION DISSOLVE PARTY PROVES IT UNABLE RENEW ITSELF ADAPT TO CHANGED SITUATION. PRESS ALSO CLAIMS DISSOLUTION DEMONSTRATES PARTY SERVED ONLY AS VEHICLE FOR SARAGEDDIN AND HIS EFFORT TURN BACK CLOCK,

6. COMMENT: COMMENT UNDER NEW LAW, WAFD LEADERS WOULD APPEAR BE CULPABLE FOR ISSUING DISSOLUTION STATEMENT WHICH DENIGRATES GOE AND COULD BE READ AS CHALLENGING SOCIAL PEACE. WITHOUT FORMAL STRUCTURE, WAFDISTS WILL HAVE LITTLE ABILITY
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INFLUENCE POLITICAL PROCESS AND WILL BE UNABLE DISSEMINATE THEIR VIEWS. SADAT IS LIKELY TO BE EMBARRASSED BY THEIR ACTION BUT EMBARRASSMENT SHOULD BE LIMITED SO LONG AS SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR ALLOWS WAFDISTS TO FADE AWAY. SHOULD HE INSIST ON PROSECUTING LEADERS, OR SHOULD THEY SERIOUSLY SEEK CHALLENGE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF RECENT LAWS, SITUATION COULD FASTER TO OVERALL DETRIMENT OF GOE'S PUBLIC IMAGE. MATTHEWS

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